



## **Governor's Conference on Aging 2004 & Arizona Aging 2020 Summit**

Presented by the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging

The Governor's Conference on Aging 2004, Active Aging: Learning Today - Enhancing Tomorrow, was held on May 11 - 13, 2004 at the Sheraton Mesa Hotel and Mesa Centennial Center. May 11<sup>th</sup> was dedicated to half-day and daylong pre-conference intensives on issues addressing best practices in the fields of health and behavioral health care. The day of the intensives was followed by the conference, which covered two days and ended with the Aging 2020 Summit, a half-day meeting of conference participants and State officials to discuss the future of aging in Arizona. The conference was well attended with more than 600 people participating in the three days of events.



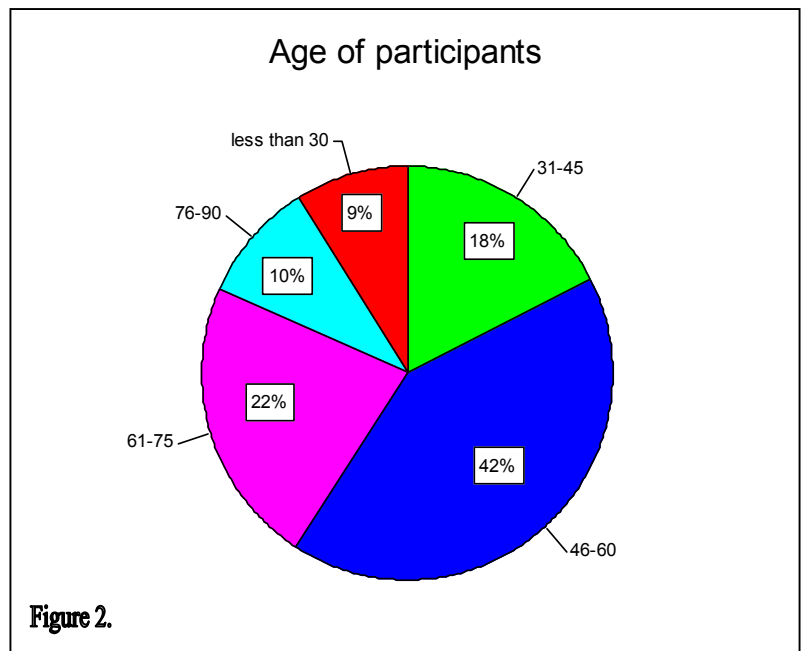
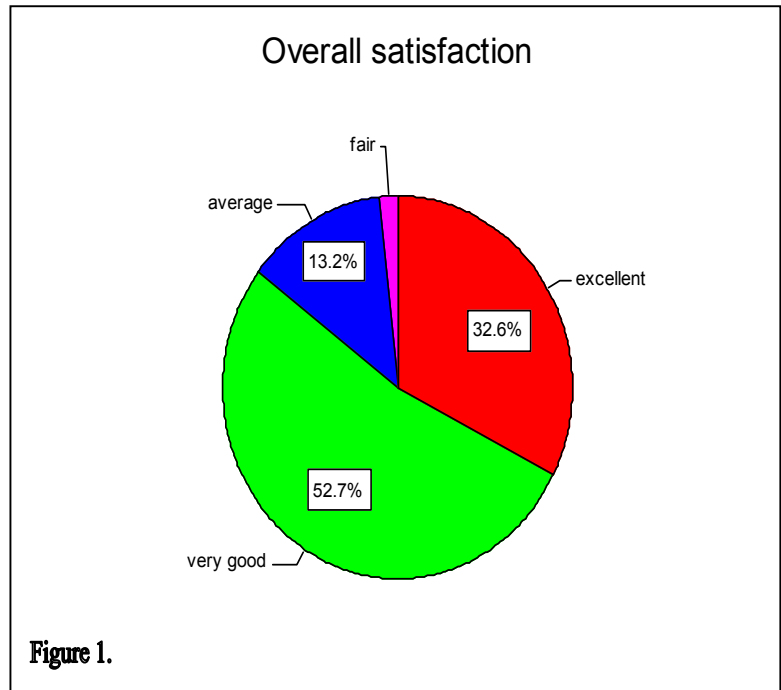
*Governor Janet Napolitano address participants at the Older Americans Month Luncheon*

All the conference sessions were directed toward providing the most recent work and information on aging-related issues and programs and stimulating discussion concerning how best to accomplish this work.

To assess if the conference met these objectives, conference and session evaluations were collected at the end of each session and on the final day of the conference. One of five

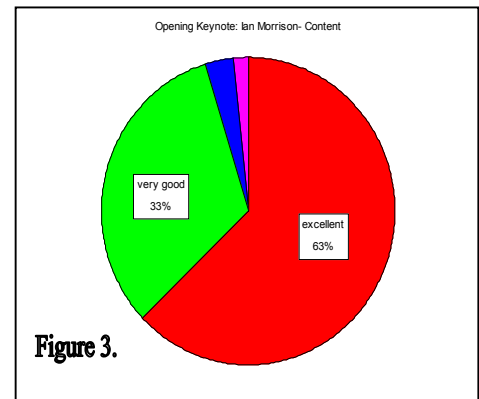
participants completed the conference evaluations. The participants rated their overall satisfaction (Figure 1) with the conference very high. On a scale of 1 to 5 with one being the highest mark, participants gave the conference an overall satisfaction rating of 1.8. The individual speakers and workshops tended to have even higher rating.

The participants that attended the conference included a mix of working professionals, families, caregivers, and older adults. The majority of attendants were professionals in the field of aging and the average age of participants ranged from 46-60 (Figure 2).



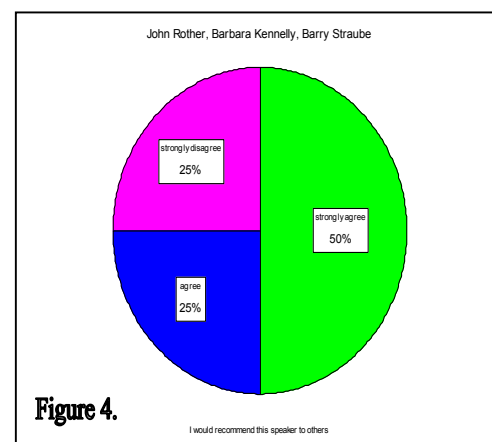
## Keynote Speakers

Ian Morrison, internationally known author and consultant opened the conference with his presentation on “Health, Wealth and Happiness: Health Care and Retirement Security.” Mr. Morrison focused his talk on changing the way we view retirement and the programs that are now available to help older and disabled adults as we age. In a humorous but sobering presentation, Mr. Morrison discussed the challenges this nation is facing in healthcare and other areas with the aging of the “Baby Boomer” Generation. In his comments he stated that the challenges are surmountable if we are willing to change the way we do business. He described different approaches to providing healthcare and ways to encourage those who are growing older to participate in their own efforts to ensure good health.



Both the style and the content of Mr. Morrison’s speech were well received (Figure 3). Participants gave Mr. Morrison’s presentation a 1.4 of 5 possible points (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest score possible) and 1.4 out of 5 points for the information he provided. A number of participants also noted that he was an exceptional speaker in their written comments.

John Rother, Barbara Kennelly and Barry Straube, opened the last day of the conference with a panel on “The Changing Form of Medicare—Meeting the Needs of Older Adults.” The panel’s presentation was dynamic and received very high ratings, 1.7 out of 5 for presentation (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest score possible) and 1.6 for content; 50% of participants stated that they would recommend the speakers to other people. (Figure 4).

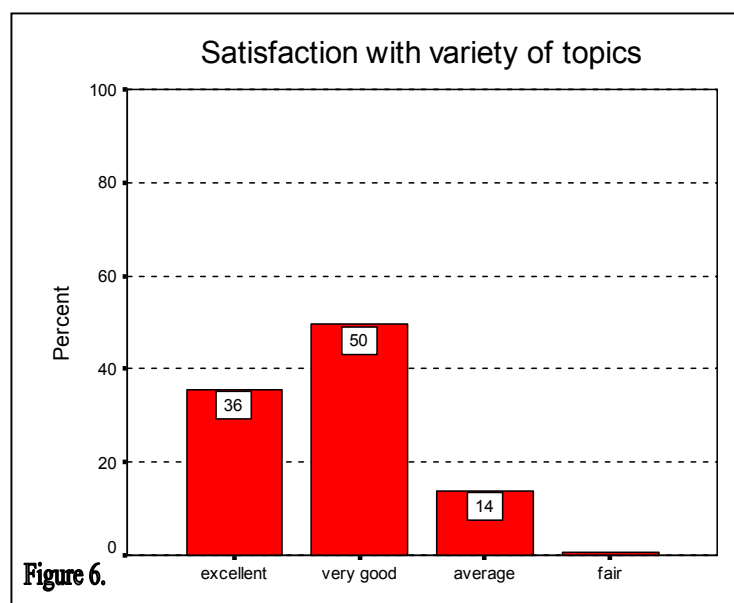
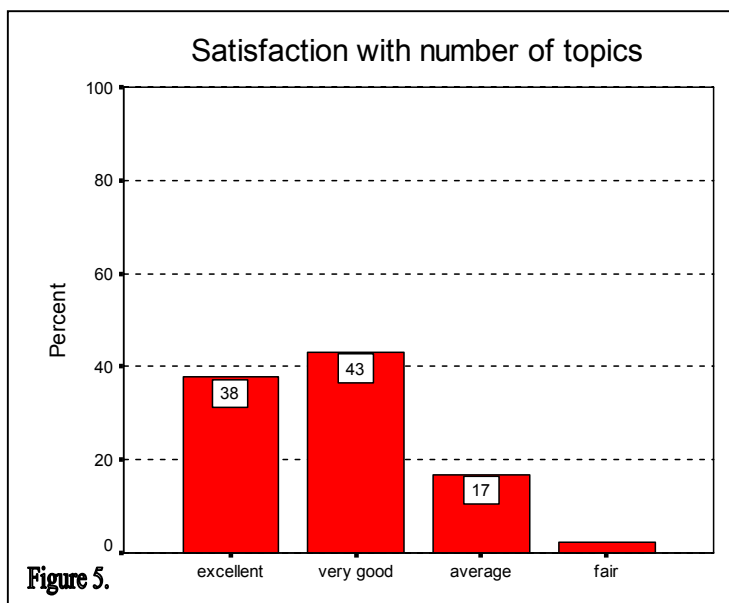


## Conference Tracks and Sessions

The structure of the conference focused on four key tracks: Caregiving and Intergenerational Issues; Health and Wellness; Policy and Trends; and Research. A plenary speaker highlighted each track, and nine to eleven workshops addressed different topics in the track. Ten poster sessions and fourteen community organizations presented information on specialized programs and resources that are available

statewide. The day before the conference, participants had the opportunity to attend one of seven pre-conference intensive sessions focusing on important issues in a more in-depth and detailed manner.

The majority of participants were very satisfied with variety and the number of topics that were offered (Figures 5 & 6). Session variety received a 1.8 of 5 for presentation (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest score possible) and session content received a 1.9 of 5. Participants were able to evaluate each session, and those evaluations are available to the Council and program presenters.



## Older Americans Month Luncheon

One of the highlights of the Conference was the Older Americans Month Luncheon featuring Governor Janet Napolitano with Master of Ceremonies, Luis Gonzalez, Arizona Diamondback. Governor Napolitano talked about the state budget difficulties but strongly emphasized that she would not balance the state budget on the backs of children and older adults. The Governor also discussed her aging related initiatives: CopperRxCare, BenefitsCheckUp, Aging 2020, and the Citizens Work Group on the Long Term Care Workforce. She also emphasized that while the growing aging population will present some challenges, it also presents the state with a great opportunity to use the accumulated wisdom and experience of older Arizonans to improve the state. Conference participants rated the luncheon 1.8 of 5 (on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest score possible).

At the luncheon, the Governor presented the Governor's Conference Awards. The Outstanding Individual and Corporation Awards are intended to honor those who have demonstrated dedication and leadership in assisting older adults. Nominations are solicited from throughout the state's aging network.

The Council was pleased to present the Outstanding Corporate Award to Southwest Gas, the Southern Arizona Division, that has actively and positively impacted on the lives of elders in numerous southern Arizona rural towns. Southwest Gas has provided hundreds of gas water heaters to homes providing the opportunity for seniors to continue to live independently. Southwest Gas employees have also contributed by volunteering hundreds of hours to help improve older adults' houses. Christina Palacios, Senior Vice President, Southern Arizona Division of Southwest Gas accepted the award for Southwest Gas.



*Governor Janet Napolitano, Christina Palacios, Luis Gonzales and Marian Lupu*

Violet Rose was honored with the Outstanding Individual Award. Violet is a seventy-year-old woman who has volunteered with the Casa Grande Police Department for the past fourteen



*Governor Janet Napolitano, Violet Rose and Luis Gonzales*

years. She has spent countless hours supervising the Senior Phone Patrol, a program where 18 callers contact homebound and vulnerable adults every day. She makes home visits regularly and follow-up calls as needed to ensure the health and safety of older adults in the Casa Grande area. Ms. Rose is also active with the Dorothy Powel Senior Adult Center, the TRIAD-SALT Council (Seniors and

Law Officers Working Together) and the Central Arizona Regional Law Officers Training Academy. Violet Rose is a model for us all.

The award ceremony was greatly enjoyed by conference participants; one of the conference comments on the luncheon was “The Governor and Gonzo (Luis Gonzales) on the same stage... Brilliant!!”

### **Arizona Aging 2020 Summit:**

Arizona is faced with twin challenges when it comes to addressing the needs of senior citizens. First we must make certain that today’s seniors have the community resources they need to live active lives as long as is possible and to ensure that needed services and support are in place to assist when health problems become a challenge.

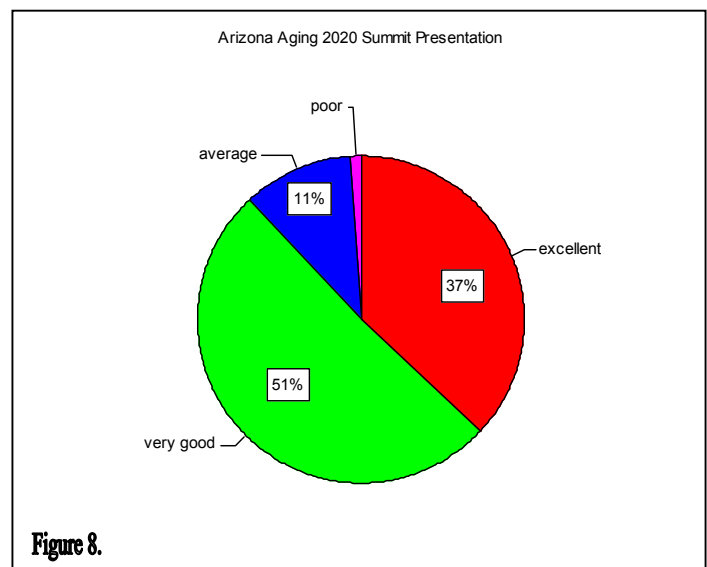
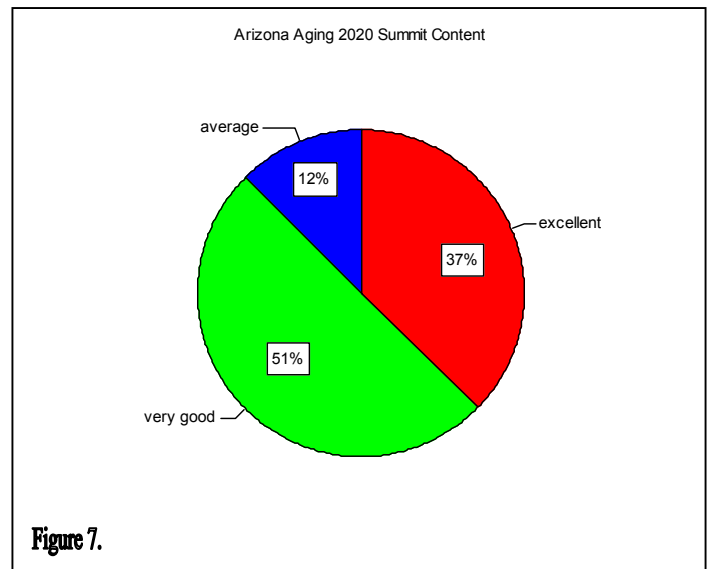
Second, even as we focus our energies on today’s over 60 population, we need to be cognizant of the significant changes that are on the horizon. In just seven years, the first of the “Baby Boomer” generation will reach 65 years of age. With the significant demographic changes brought by the aging of this generation will come an array of opportunities and challenges to our civic life...and we need to be ready. Within two decades, one of every four Arizonans will be over 60 years of age. This demographic trend, tied to the aging of the “baby boomer” generation, will provide both challenges and opportunities to our State.

The Aging 2020 Summit gave the participants at the Conference an opportunity to voice their thoughts about what should be included in the Aging 2020 plan. Department Directors from the Departments of Health Services, Economic Security and AHCCCS started the discussion off by providing an overview of trends in aging that they are monitoring and reacting to. Conference participants then had the unique opportunity to interact with senior staff from various state departments, who lead an interactive discussion on the future of Arizona's efforts to assist older persons.

With the increasing diversity and population of older adults there needs to be a wider spectrum of opportunities, resources, and services available. Sessions presented at the conference discussed the above needs.

Toward that end, in March, Governor Napolitano issued an Executive Order calling on Arizona's state agencies to begin planning now for the very different world we will encounter in just a few years.

Overall, conference participants were thought the presentation and content of the Aging Summit was very good to excellent (Figures 7 & 8).



The conference continues to be self-sustaining, with funds from sponsorships and registration fees. The Council's Director and staff took an affirmative approach to make the conference as affordable for both senior citizens and professionals. Sponsorships and changes in event structure enabled this to occur without sacrificing quality. These changes enabled the conference registration fee to be kept at the same cost as the 2002 conference, \$25.00 for retired senior citizens and \$75.00 for professionals.

The Governor's Conference on Aging 2004 gave older adults and professionals working on aging issues an opportunity to meet, discuss important issues, and learn new information and ideas about innovative programs and methods. This is best reflected in some of the participants' comments from the evaluations:

- *I found all sessions and pre-intensives very well presented and useful to me.*
- *Speakers were effective in point of focus. Thanks!*
- *I really appreciate the opportunity to learn, grow, meet new people and be stimulated.*
- *An excellent program for people of all ages to attend. A wonderful learning experience. A lot of helpful information to be used now as well as in the future. Thank you Governor you are awesome!*
- *Excellent conference, good topics, great challenges*
- *Good information, excellent networking opportunities*
- *Best conference in many years. Thanks*

## **Summary**

The Governor's Conference on Aging is the largest statewide aging issues conference in Arizona. "Active Aging: Learning Today, Enhancing Tomorrow" provided a forum for the community to come together to explore issues, programs, and services that relate to aging today and into the future. Older adults, families, caregivers, and professionals who participated in the conference all used the opportunity to learn about the innovations, share experiences, and consider new ideas for the future. The conference facilitated the ability to learn how face the challenges and opportunities ahead in Arizona's seniors.